

12.67
The Notorious *IMPOSTOR*
IMPOSTER;

OR, THE
DEAF and DUMMANCURED:

BEING A
NARRATIVE

Of that wicked Counterfeit

THOMAS MITCHELL,

F O R

Imposing on such of His Majesty's
Subjects as are Charitably inclin'd; by pre-
tending to be Deaf and Dum, and Counter-
feiting a Paralytic Disorder; who was try'd
at the General Quarter Sessions of the
Peace, holden for our Sovereign Lord the
KING, by Adjournment, at St. Margaret's
Hill, SOUTHWARK.

London, Printed by T. BAILEY, at the Ship
and Crown, in Leaden-hall-street.

The Notion of

IMPOSTER;

OR, THE

DEAF AND DUMB MANICURED.

BEING A

NARRATIVE



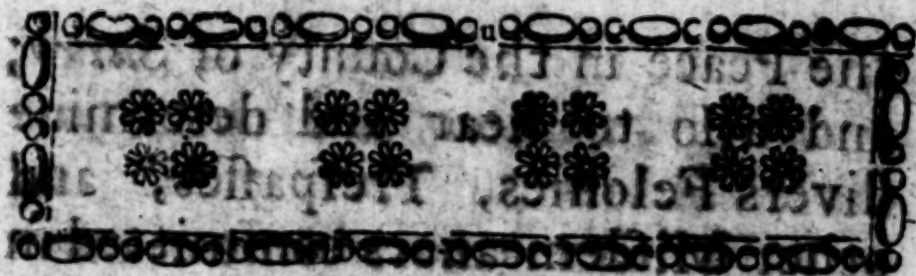
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FOR

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London, Printed by T. BAKER, at the Ship
and Crown, in London-borough.



the said County. H. D.

DUMIMAN CURED
OR, THE
NARRATIVE

Thomas Mitchell, &c.

HO was Tryed before
 Sir **WILLIAM RICH-**
ARDSON, Knt. Chair-
man, WILLIAM
CLARK, Esq; THOMAS
DAWSON, Esq; and others their
Fellow Justices, assigned to keep
 the

the Peace in the County of *Surry*; and also to hear and determine divers Felonies, Trespasses, and other Misdemeanors committed in the said County.

Thomas Mitchell, late of the Parish of *Lambeth* in the County of *Surry*; Labourer, was indicted, for that he, on the 15th Day of *January* in the Thirty-second Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Second, King of *Great Britain, France, and Ireland, &c.* being a loose, idle, and disorderly Person, not minding and intending to get his Livelihood by honest Labour and Industry, but craftily and subtilly intending to impose on such of his Majesty's Subjects as are charitably inclined, did hold in his right Hand,

Hand, and expose, a Paper Writing, in the common Highway, purporting, that he, the said *Thomas*, was afflicted with the Palsy, and was deaf and dumb; by means whereof he did impose on divers of his Majesty's Subjects, although he was neither deaf nor dumb, nor afflicted with the Palsy; he did obtain and get into his Hands and Possession, divers large Sums of Money, the Property of divers Subjects of the said Lord the King under false pretences, &c. to which he pleaded Guilty.

Mr. Wetherston. Said I am a Constable, and live at the *Crown Alehouse*, near *Westminster-Bridge Lambeth*, on Sunday the 14th of Jan. last, the Worshipful *William Clark Esq*; (now upon the Bench) stopped at my House. in his Coach, and told me he had seen a Man on the Road, in *St. George's Fields*, which he strongly suspected to be an Imposter, and ordered me to go and take him up, and carry him to his House against his Return.

turny I went into the Fields, and there I saw the Prisoner; near him was an old Woman far selling Apples. I went to her, and said to her pray Mistress be ingenuous with me, and let me know in what Manner this Man comes here. She said, Sir, he comes here as fast as any Man in England, meaning still from shaking. He immediately looks round him, and drops on his Knees, then out comes his Board, which he puts into his left Hand; and then he begins to shake.

Q. In what Condition did he appear.

Wallerston. His right Hand and Head shook considerably, as if much afflicted with the Palsy; he had much Froth and Filth came continually from his Mouth, on a dirty Rag that was hung under his Chin; he had a Pair of Plaid Garters tied over his Forehead, and round behind his Head, then brought forward and fastened near his Temples with a ~~string~~ *string*; one End came through his right Hand Shirt Sleeve, and by being fastened to his Wrist, I observed his Head and that Hand kept Motion together. I talked to him, he made me no Answer. I took hold of him, and pulled him, but could not make him to speak, move, or any thing else. Then I took a great Stick which he had, and struck him twice; he still continued shaking, but made no Answer. He had this Board in his left Hand; producing a *Board in the Form of a Hornbook, with Paper Writing pasted on it.*)

It

It was read in Court:

" Dear good Christians, I hope you will con-
sider my Misfortune, for I was born deaf and
dumb in the Army Thirty-seven Years ago;
my Father was killed in the Army on the Sea,
and about the same Time it pleased God to af-
flict me with the Palsy.

" I hope in God that you nor yours may never
meet with the like Misfortune, being born on
the Sea, so that I have no Friend, nor no
Parish, nor no Friends to help me; I am oblig-
ed to travel for my Bread, and I hope that
you will take some Pity on me, through the
Blessing of our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

Walter Jones observed his right Hand was
held out, being fastened so to his Head by his
Garters, that he could not put it down so as to
hang down straight with his Body, unless the
Garter broke or his Head came off. I took my
Knife and cut the Garter, then his Hand would
fall down; and I observed his Head and Hand
did not keep Time together so exact as before,
for by the Use of the Garter, the moving of his
Hand, moved his Head at the same Time as be-
fore; by this Time there came People about us,
I charged them with him, while I went to Mr.
Knewell a Gardener in Lambeth Marsh to borrow
a Wheelbarrow. I got one, and we got the
Prisoner

Prisoner in it, for he would not walk, and we wheeled him to Mr. *Clark's*, he was not returned, I had him in at Mr. *Sibley's*, at the *White Horse*. When Mr. *Clark* returned, from Church he asked me if I had brought the Man, I said I had, and his Coach too.

Q. Was any Method made use of, to open his Mouth?

Waterston. Yea. I got two Men to hold his Head, and I by forcing his Cheeks in, did with great Difficulty get his Mouth open; there I saw his Tongue doubled back. We saw there was a compleat Tongue, in his Mouth also I found two Pieces of hard Soap, one on each Side of his Mouth, by which Means he had made a great deal of Froth and Filth issue from his Mouth. I searched him, and found a long yellow Purse on him, it was empty; I found three Shilling and three Farthings, which he had collected in about two Hours Time, which I gave to his Coachmen that wheeled him along.

Prisoner. I had no Soap in my Mouth.

Waterston. He would not speak yet, then I took a Lancet from my Pocket, and went to bleed him on his right Arm (or at least to make him believe so) but he snatched it away quick, although he pretended to have no Use of it; also when I was

was going to borrow the Wheelbarrow, I said to a Gentlemrⁿ try him if he will take any thing in in his right Hand, the Gentleman went and gave him a Penny in his right Hand, which he with the same Hand very readily put into his Pocket. When his Money lay on the Table in the Ale-house, I said to him had not you better take this Money now and go about your Business; he turned his Head, and looked very wishfully at me, but did not attempt to go. Then I went into another Room, and after I was gone, he claped his Elbow on the Table; and laid his Head and Hand, and was as still from shaking as possible, the Justice ordered me to wheel him to Bridewell; I with Assistance did, and when he was in his Coach again he caught fast hold on each Side with his Hands, fearing he should be turned over, when we got him there, he walked in very well, I went to him afterwards when he was in Bridewell, and asked him what he got a Day by this Business; he said he used when he went out on his *Dumb Flatt*, which was the Term he gave it, to get about three half Crowns a Day one Day with another, but Sundays used to be his best Days; he told me there is another Man which goes out upon what he called the *Dead Lay*, that goes about with Pictures to sell, and when in a Place that would serve his Purpose, would fall down in Fits, and sham them so well, that People would give him Money, by which he got a good Livelihood.

lihood, I gave him three Pence for his Intelligence and left him.

Mr. Richard Andrews Sworn.

Richard Andrews. I am Clerk to Mr. Clark. On the *Tuesday* Morning after, his Worship ordered me to go to Bridewell to the Prisoner to see if I could make him speak or not; I went to him and asked him if he could speak he made Motions with his Hands and Eyes, as if he was imploring Mercy, and began to dribble at his Mouth, I loudly told him, if he could speak he must, or he would be whiped, he still continued in his Obstinacy, there was a Man in the Room who called himself a Farrier, he put his Fingers in his Mouth and said he had a very fair Tongue, he still continued speechless; in about a Quarter of an Hour he crawled from one Block to another, at last he fell down on one Knee then the other, then took off his Hat and still made Motions. I said if you continue obstinate, I shall stand with you no longer, you must be whip'd; when he saw the Man preparing to whip him, then he cry'd out (for God Almighty's Sake forgive me, I will do so no more, I am very hungry,) after I had brought him to his Speech, a Man that was by, said D—n your old Blood, give me the Money you have rob'd of me, for you have had many a Penny of my Money; then he began to walk and talk as well as any Man there. I gave him two pence, and asked

asked him where he was born, he said on the Sea; I examined him very closely, and asked him where he was brought up, he said by a Nurse that took Care of his Mother while on board a Ship. I asked him Abundance of Questions, about the place of his Birth, and told him you must be whip'd till you have told me the place where you was born, for you have heretofore imposed on the Publick, you are now imposing on me; I gave him Time to consider of it, and withdrew for about a Quarter of an Hour, then I went to him a second Time, he at last said he was born at *Chilton* in *Wiltshire*, and that there his Father was an Inhabitant. I asked him what Town lay near to *Chilton*, he said it is about a Mile off one Side of *Hungerford*; he farther said he had a Brother at the *Black Swan* in *Castle Street* at *Reading* in *Berkshire*; there I might hear of him. I asked him what the Person's Name was that kept the *Black Swan*: he said his Name was *Anthony Rawlins*. I examined him as to the Use of his Garter that was fastened to his Head, and went down under his Shirt and fastened to his Wrist he told me it was to keep a regular Motion with his Head and Hand together, and said his Neck was sore and raw with the Motion of the Garter. I asked him what he generally made per Day, and which were his best Days, he said Sundays were his best Days, and that he generally made five, six or seven Shillings per Day. I asked him if he had

had ever been taken up before for practising in this Sort, he said about two Years ago he had been taken up by the Parish Officers in *Hanover Square* and committed to *Totbil-fields Bridewell*, that there he continued nine Day, during which Time he did not speak nor eat as any Body could perceive, and kept moving his Head and Hand as he had done when taken up in *St. George's Fields*: that the Officers thought him a real Object of Pity, and discharged him, and gave him something.

Q. to Prisoner. Will you ask this Evidence any Questions.

Prisoner. I will ask him if he will forgive me this Time,

Mr. Andrews, the Prisoner told me he lodged at one *Mr. Joseph King's* in *Kent-street*,

Joseph King Sworn.

Joseph King. I keep the Bell in *Kent-street Southwark*.

Q. Do you know the Prisoner?

King. I do, he has lodged in that Street at one House or another for Nine or Ten Years.

Q. Could he speak when he lodg'd with you.
King

King. Yes he could speak as well as you, please your Worship, he used to go out in the Morning and come Home on Nights,

Q. Did not you know that he went about as an Imposture?

King. No, he went out in the Morning and came Home at Night, and when he had nothing to do that Way, he used to carry Coals for me, (I sell Coals) and dig in the Garden, and do what I had to do.

Q. Did not you know during the Time that he lodg'd with you, that he went out with this Board that is here produced, in Order to get Money by these Pretences.

King. I never saw that Board till this Day.

Q. Did you never meet him in the Streets or Roads.

King. No never in my Life

Q. Did he use to live well at Night when he came Home.

King. He could eat two Two-penny Loaves for Supper.

Q. Had he generally Plenty of Money at his Return

Return these Days when he went out, as you say in the Morning?

King. He used to pay me in Halfpence.

Q. Do you keep a Publick House?

King. No, I do not. I keep a Chandler's Shop.

Q. Did he use at his Return at Night, to bring in a Fowl or good Joynt of Meat.

King. He would go out and buy a Hog's Face or Chitterlins, and such like Food, I never knew him bring Fowls Home.

Q. Did he never bring Home good Mutton and Lamb?

King. I never knew that he did.

Q. What name did he go by.

King. He went by the name of *Slabbering Tom*; he sent me a Note by a Woman out of Bridewell, and desir'd me to send him some Things, then I said I'd send no such Scoundrels any thing, and I did not send him a Farthing's worth.

Q. Do you know who wrote this Board?

King.

King. No, I do not

Q. What Name did he send to you by, when in Bridewell?

King. He sent to me by the name of *Thomas Mitchell.*

Q. What did he send to you for?

King. He sent to me for Bread and Butter, and a Knife and Fork.

Prisoner. I did intend with the Money I got that Sunday, to buy a Jack Ass, and never to follow this no more.

Mr. Joshua Ellis Sworn.

Mr. Ellis. I having seen the Prisoner on the Road several Times, seemingly in a deplorable Condition, and look'd upon him with an Eye of Pity, and used to think it was a Hardship on him, that the parish to which he belonged, did not provide for him. I several Times have relieved him, but on hearing there was one in his Condition committed to Bridewell, I went there to see if he was the Man. I begged of the servant there to let me see the Man that was committed as an Imposture. He shew'd me to the Prisoner; I said to him, are you the Man that was at such a Place such a Day. Yes I am, he said. I said I cannot think

think how you could behave in this Manner. I said let me see those Things you had on on the Road a slabbering Bib, and Things tied about your head, and let me see you act it, and by that I shall believe you are the Man, he fell down on one knee, and fell to shaking his Head and right Hand, and did it as I had seen before: Then I said you are a vile Dog, I could not have thought it; I said prey what might you make a Week of it, he said sometimes Eighteen, sometimes Twenty Shillings, and sometimes Fourteen. I said it is a brave Trade: now let me see you slabber genteelly as you used to do; he began and did. I said, they say you put Soap in your Mouth; he did not say he did, neither did he deny it. I told him he was as well able to work as I was, and it was a Pity he had not been detected sooner, and left him.

Prisoner. I did not slabber.

Ellis. He told me he would never do so no more.

Prisoner. That I did say.

Wetherston. I believe the Prisoner can tell who wrote the Board for him, if he pleases.

Prisoner. If I was to be racked to Pieces, I cannot tell who wrote it,

Ellis.

Ellis, I asked him how he came to learn to do this Shaking so, and wagle his Head, he told me an old man in the Country learn'd him.

Prisoner. No, it was an old Sailor that taught me.

Mr. Andrews. The Prisoner told me it was an old Soldier in the Army that taught him. One Circumstance I have omitted, which I beg leave to mention now : When I came to Bridewell, I was told they had watched him through a secret place, and saw him sit still from Shaking, when he imagined no Body saw him ; and when he heard any thing move, or as he thought, People coming towards him, he would begin and shake as before : Also, when he found I was determin'd to make him speak, if possible, he made Signs he was broken body'd.

Prisoner's Defence.

Forgive me this one Time, and I will never do the like again while I have Breath in my Body ; I will go to work for any body that will employ me.

Q. Have you any Body to your Character.

Prisoner. I have not.

After Sir *William Richardson* had sum'd up the Evidence

dence to the Jury, they immediately brought him
in Guilty, and he received Sentence to stand an
Hour each Day, for three Market Days, with his
Neck in the Pillory, to be imprisoned for three
Months, and to pay a Fine of 6s. 8 d.

F I N I S



